REMARKS

Claims 7-14, 23 and 25 are pending in this application. Claims 7-14, 23 and 25 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite due to the inadvertent removal of a semicolon. Claims 7, 10-14, 23 and 25 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elam in view of Armstrong. Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elam in view of Armstrong and further in view of Rigney. Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elam in view of Armstrong and further in view of Foster.

Response to Rejections under Section 112:

Claim 7 has been amended herein to reinsert the missing semicolon. The word "of" after the word "coating" has also been removed in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion. These amendments overcome the rejection of the claims under 35 USC 112.

Response to Rejections under Section 103:

Claim 7 has been amended herein to include the limitations of:
"applying a non-reactive mask having a layer of ceramic powder comprising zirconium oxide to a selected area of the surface of the component;
coating the component with a layer of coating material that is deposited onto the surface of the component where no mask exists and that is physically blocked from being deposited onto the surface of the component but is deposited onto the mask in the selected area; and
removing the mask and the coating material deposited onto the mask by dry ice blasting without removing the coating material deposited onto the surface of the component."

Elam teaches away from this combination of limitations because Elam clearly describes a reactive-type mask (see Abstract and column 2, line 9, for example). The reactive mask of Elam prevents the coating material from being deposited onto the maskant material; however, it has the disadvantage of potential volume change of the mask during the deposition process (see column 3, lines 49-54). Reactive maskant materials are generally avoided because it is difficult to control the reaction between the coating environment and the maskant, as admitted by Elam at

column 1, lines 54-60. Thus, amended claim 7 and its dependent claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

The applicants also note that the Examiner has commented in the rejection of claim 10 that Elam is interpreted as teaching that it is possible to include any amount of zirconium oxide. However, claim 10 would preclude the inclusion of an inhibitor, and this would make the coating of Elam unworkable. Reactive masks need an inhibitor to prevent an excessive volumetric change in the mask, as described in Elam at column 3, lines 47-57, with the minimum amount being 5% of the solids portion. Thus, Elam specifically teaches away from the limitations of claim 10.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner enter this amendment and reconsider the allowance of the amended application.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this paper. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____
John P. Musone
Registration No. 44,961
(407) 736-6449

Siemens Corporation
Intellectual Property Department
170 Wood Avenue South
Iselin, New Jersey 08830